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PRINCETON TORY



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Notes from the Publisher

On behalf of the entire *Tory* staff, I take great pride in welcoming the freshman class of 2006 to the best college campus in America. You’re gonna love your four years here. Take full advantage of the top-notch resources, professors, and fellow students. And don’t be concerned if you feel overwhelmed at times; no one expects you to have it all figured out, at least not yet.



In fact, I’m a Politics major, but when I first arrived at Princeton, I honestly didn’t know the fundamental differences between Republicans and Democrats. That being said, I was raised with a general appreciation for government, patriotism, and small-town values, but most importantly, my parents instilled in me a thorough understanding of right and wrong—and an unwavering faith in an almighty God. Needless to say, when I arrived at Princeton, my eyes were opened quickly and they’ve been wide open ever since. So many ideas have been thrown my way, and sometimes it is difficult to separate the good from the bad from the absurd.

I’m pretty sure you’ll experience much of the same. Don’t close your mind to new ideas—but rather than welcoming them all with open arms—use discernment while exploring. I found the best advice on a Bazooka Joe wrapper: “Be open-minded, but don’t fill it with garbage.” Works pretty well.

It is our hope that the *Tory* will, in some way, help shape the way you view the world. If you’re conservative, please write—if not, please read. We believe that conservative ideas—minimal government, personal responsibility, traditional family values, and a strong military—are the cornerstone of any strong society. And while academia has turned its back on most things traditional and conservative, we present our views as a challenge to those who attempt to build a new world by destroying many of the qualities we value in our civilization.

Do not hesitate to contact me, or any of the *Tory* staff for that matter, with comments or questions. The best part of this job is that we get a chance to talk with so many different passionate and intelligent people. We look forward to hearing from you and sharing in the Princeton experience.

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THE
PRINCETON TORY
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THE RANT

➢ As we inaugurate the 2002-2003 academic year, we feel compelled to comment on the most pressing campus-related issue: the notorious conduct of Princeton's admissions office over the past six months. Initially, the obvious must be emphasized: the use of sensitive information to access admissions information at rival schools, even if well-intentioned, is illegal. President Tilghman was right to take disciplinary action against Director of Admissions Stephen LeMenager; indeed, the manner in which she has handled this crisis thus far is admirable. That said, let's cut through the high-minded ethical statements for a moment. The unspoken truth about the conduct of the admissions office is that, with few exceptions, the efforts of administrators to access information were meant to improve the security of an innovative, if poorly crafted, Yale admissions website. In fact, Princeton's administrators immediately *volunteered* information about the security deficiencies in the site to officials at Yale (in the process, of course, incriminating themselves). Amidst the exchange of high-fives between the *Yale Daily News* and *New York Times* as they continue a long tradition of lambasting Princeton's reputation, it should be remembered that a man nationally renowned for his integrity and compassion has lost a key component of his professional life.

➢ Princeton's Office of Religious Life espouses the following motto: "[We] express the University's concern for values and ethics…and for the creation of a community of persons who want to see life in its wholeness as they seek to know and to follow God's will." While claiming to "support" the "expression and nurturing of faith," their funding practices suggest otherwise. When the latest issue of *CommonSense* magazine, Princeton's student-led atheist publication, landed on our door, we were shocked to see on the bottom of the first page that they thanked the Office of Religious Life for financial support. Apparently, Princeton's ministry subsidizes atheistic writing. On a campus brimming with secular professors in its Department of Religion (go figure), this isn't particularly surprising. Nonetheless, the decision by the Deans of Religious Life and various campus chaplains to support a publication premised on *ignoring* "God's will" is an affront to the Office's mission and integrity. Needless to say, we hope the *Tory*'s forthcoming application for funding will be well received.

➢ Ah, the ACLU, America's courageous defender of civil liberties and religious freedom. They can always be counted on to save the day when the smallest scent of religion is in the air. Whether they're busy defending the country from school prayer, nativity scenes, Christmas carols, or the Ten Commandments, the ACLU always seeks to "protect" the citizenry from religion in public schools or, for that matter, any form of civic life. However, much to our surprise, the ACLU has finally found a religion it will defend. The University of North Carolina recently required all incoming freshmen to read portions of the Koran, along with commentary from an Islamic scholar. The ACLU's reaction? They leapt to UNC's defense, arguing that the readings were purely "educational" and were not presented as fact. The *Tory* is not on principle opposed to studying the Koran's teachings in an academic setting, but we are concerned with the undeniable hypocrisy in the ACLU's position. Imagine if UNC had mandated readings from the New Testament, with comments by Billy Graham or Pope John Paul II. Hello litigation. One begins to wonder whether the ACLU is committed to upholding the Establishment Clause, or is simply anti-Christian.

➢ In an April 2002 Rant, the editors of the Tory, called for the Senate to pass the "Born Alive Infants Protection Act" which stipulates that doctors can no longer kill newly born children who survive an abortion. We don't want to claim any credit (inaudible pat on the back) but three months later, the Senate passed it by unanimous consent and President Bush signed it into law. We are also proud to say that two Princeton professors were prominently involved in its success. Professor Hadley Arkes, a visiting scholar in the James Madison Program, was the chief architect of the bill and Professor Robert George joined President Bush at the signing ceremony. The

Tory thanks these two men for their devotion to expanding human rights to newborn babies. Professor Peter Singer was notably absent from the proceedings; we're guessing he was busy preparing a position paper in defense of some form of "——cide." Regardless, on this day, life won out. Three cheers for sanity!

- The *New York Times* recently announced that homosexual "marriage" announcements would start appearing in its pages. Other regional papers have also followed suit. The basic logic is that if individuals love each other, and want to get married, then it is sufficiently newsworthy to warrant an announcement in the papers. (Last time we checked, homosexual marriage was illegal, but that's beside the point.) The explanation sounds nice on the surface, but its logic is dangerous. At what point does the paper deem a "relationship" unfit for publication? What if we 'loved' our sister and wanted to marry her? Or maybe two women at the same time? A 13-year-old? The family dog? Or better yet, the entire staff of the *Prog*?

- The *Tory*'s 2002 Loser of the Summer award concluded in a dead heat, with two foaming-mouth critics in the losers' circle: *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd, whose penchant for creating ridiculous nicknames for Bush Administration officials is unparalleled (anyone who makes a living by referring to the Secretary of Defense as "Rummy" should seek help), and Democratic National Committee chief Terry "The Kettle is Black" McAuliffe, another party hack who loves to swim in the pool of privilege, but hates when others try to jump in.

- Fifteen of the nineteen hijackers on 9/11 were from _______. The foreign minister of _______ recently announced that, if the U.S. decided to launch an attack on Iraq, they wouldn't allow us to use their air bases (even though, hint hint, we saved them from that same man just ten years ago). Religious leaders in _______ recently held a telethon in support of the families of Palestinian suicide bombers. _______'s people are subject to juryless trials, lashings, and public beheadings. Each year, thousands of Arab youths from government-sanctioned schools in ________ are indoctrinated with a militant form of Islam, not unlike the one espoused by bin Laden. Last month's Defense Policy Board described _______ as "active at every level of the terror chain." Maybe its time for the U.S. to change its policy towards – you guessed it – Saudi Arabia. And, if cause-of-the-week Princetonians are bickering about where to divest from next, our votes go here.

- While President Tilghman has done much to prove that her value as an administrator extends far beyond the symbolism involved in having a female executive, her recent appointments have raised serious question marks. Privately, a wide range of undergraduates and alumni continue to speculate that recent appointments at the Woodrow Wilson School and the School of Engineering, to name but a few, were motivated largely by gender considerations. We at the *Tory*, though not exactly Tilghman enthusiasts, would like to reaffirm our basic level of respect and appreciation for the leadership she has brought to the University. To be sure, she has erred on a number of important issues, notably in the diversity-laden rhetoric she's been hurling at students since the September 11th attacks. But with respect to her hiring decisions, it is worth keeping an open mind about her intentions: she has proved herself to be a top-notch speaker and intellect, and there is no concrete evidence to suggest that her appointments (male or female) are not similarly qualified. On the national level, this leeway is never given to Republican leaders, nor do we expect it would be in the miraculous event that Princeton was in the capable hands of a conservative (one can only shudder at the uproar that would be created if a string of religious men were given significant departmental leadership posts). These are merely debater's points, though: it is precisely *because* respect for presidential appointments rarely extends to one's political opponents that we feel it important to do so now. Good luck, President Tilghman.

- We encourage all Princetonians to visit the World War II memorial display (a book containing the names of all the fallen Princetonians) in the Frist Campus Center. From Captain Lamont '20 (the first Princetonian to die in the war) to Captain Cain '39 (the last) these men are true American heroes. As we've suggested in these pages before, Princeton should commemorate these men outside the walls of Nassau by naming a building after one of them or, better yet, all of them. Proposed name: Veterans Hall.

-Compiled by the* Tory *Editors

Dig in and Fight: Why America Must Win

Pete Hegseth '03

There is no doubt that America will remember. The anniversary of September 11th is upon us, and every American will soon pause to remember the fallen, pray for their families, and celebrate America's cherished values. Just as our grandparents still recall the day that "lives in infamy" and our parents vividly remember where they were when JFK was shot, Princetonians will never forget the day they saw the Twin Towers fall. Flags will be at half-mast, poems will be recited (Princeton's favorite), the networks will commemorate, and many tears will be shed. Americans, if only for a brief moment, will revisit the myriad of feelings that engulfed them after the attacks. Indeed, all of this is necessary and proper.

However, despite the remembrance and national pride, a large question remains unanswered: What type of memory does America, and for that matter, her allies, have? Is it a selective and temporary one or is it disciplined and steadfast? Do Americans have a fluffy, feel-good, politically-correct memory—concerned only with comforting and understanding? Or does there exist a greater depth in the American psyche, one capable of transcending first-order emotions? Americans will most certainly remember the innocent victims, the final sacrifice made by servicemen in New York, and the courage of the passengers aboard Flight 93, but will our memory stop there? We will soon find out.

A disciplined memory requires not only that we seek to conveniently remember those things which tug at our hearts, but also those things which make us grit our teeth. While we bicker over the best way to memorialize the World Trade Center, we mustn't forget that we still have thousands of American GI's in Afghanistan hunting down a terrorist network which seeks our ultimate destruction. Closer to home, this year Princeton plans to use Freshman Orientation Week to once again showcase it's indelible commitment to post-modernism (moral relativism). The schedule calls for freshman to attend a two-hour session about "sexual politics," discussing works from, among others, Betty Friedan, the co-founder of the National Organization for Women—a radical, leftist, feminist organization. Additionally, on the 11th, Princeton freshman will spend only one hour at a "commemorative assembly" and directly afterwards will be ushered into a two-and-a-half hour indoctrination entitled "Reflections on Diversity." At all of these sessions, and in the classroom, the University will attempt to treat all ideas equally – except, of course, those regarding religion and traditional values – and in doing so will undermine it's moral responsibility to discover, decipher, and encourage correct thinking.



A disciplined memory is not vengeful and does not rely on reciprocating hatred; instead, it forces one to fully examine *facts*, rather than reflexively bowing to the human desire to see the best in all people at all times. The absence of this approach would land America in the history books alongside the likes of the weak-kneed Jimmy Carter who, in 1978, declared the end of the Cold War. What if we had not continued to fight that ideological battle? Or better yet, should we have sought to "understand" the Stalinists and try to integrate some of their propaganda into our classrooms and universities? The name Neville Chamberlain also comes to mind.

An undisciplined memory, motivated by a naïve desire to "understand" the terrorists, can degenerate into an anti-American pow-wow; giving credence to the evil ideologies that motivate their violence. Many people, especially in the utopian world of "global citizenship," prefer to write off our assailants as a "renegade few" who "hijacked" a peaceful religion. Even more believe that once our work in Afghanistan is done, the war on terrorism is over. Nothing could be further from the truth—there are hundreds of thousands of people who are equally willing to distort the Koran's teachings as motivation for future attacks. No matter how much we try to "understand" these militants, *they* will surely not understand us. The veil of hatred and, yes, evil does not seek truth, but instead thrives on lies.

What, then, should be the result of a disciplined memory? How can America responsibly, yet courageously, continue the war against terrorism? First, we need to continue our hunt for outstanding terrorists. The nature of

our democracy leaves us forever vulnerable at home, rendering ineffective complete reliance on a Department of Homeland Defense or handguns in the cockpit to keep us safe. It is America's responsibility, both to its citizens and to rest of the world, to bring the fight to the terrorists. As President Bush said in his speech on September 20th, "Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen…This is not just America's fight. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom."

Ultimately, America must win an ideological battle similar to those waged against fascism and communism. Imagine a world dominated by Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito – or, as I mentioned earlier, a world ruled by the murderous ideologies of the Soviets. FDR did not cower in the wake of Pearl Harbor and successive presidents, most notably Ronald Reagan, never backed down from the Soviets. This is still our moment and this is still our mission—we have a duty to be steadfast and never quit—and we have a president who understands the long-term repercussions of inaction. This does not mean shooting from the hip and carelessly flaunting our military superiority. It means recognizing the cold, hard fact that in order for peace to exist—in New York, Baghdad, and Jerusalem—America must take the lead.

After commemorating the victims and defeating al-Qaeda, what then is the next step? Recently, there has been a great debate about whether or not to attack Iraq. There is little disputing that Saddam is the source of much evil in the Arab world; well known are his willingness to employ chemical weapons against innocents and besiege neighboring countries. His links to al-Qaeda, on the other hand, are at present circumstantial. Administration attempts to find such a connection appear to have floundered—however, this fact should not deter the United States from its goal of regime change. Saddam's non-compliance with U.N sanctions after the Gulf War has allowed him to build an arsenal of chemical and biological weapons (including over 500 tons of VX nerve gas and Sarin gas); it is also no secret that he seeks nuclear weapons. Saddam's Iraq is an imminent threat to the stability of the Arab world, the



safety of our Israeli allies, and the progress of democracy. His payments to families of Palestinian suicide bombers constitute ample evidence of his support for terrorism.

In short, Iraq is a sanctuary for terrorists and the anti-Western ideologies which fuel them.

I believe, if done correctly, eliminating Saddam and liberating Iraq could be the 'Normandy Invasion' or 'fall of the Berlin Wall' of our generation. Not only will a victory in Iraq rid the world of a brutal dictator, but it will also provide an opportunity for democratic principles to gain favor in surrounding Arab polities. It is widely reported that the Iraqi people are eager to be rid of Saddam, and there is equally encouraging evidence that republican principles could thrive there. Iraq and Afghanistan, as examples of functioning liberal democracies, could begin a tidal wave of democracy in the Arab world, a force that would be conducive to peace, freedom, and basic human rights. Plainly, victory in Iraq is essential for the ultimate victory of "freedom over fear."

However, before we move against Iraq, it would be advantageous, albeit not necessary, for Bush to gain the consent of Congress, work to pacify the conflict between Israel and Palestine, and make a convincing case for the effectiveness of regime change to our allies, young and old. It is not enough to deem Saddam "evil" (although he is) and declare war. There is sufficient evidence to make a convincing and diplomatically defensible case for his removal, and President Bush must do so. It is America's duty to continue the war on terrorism, but in doing so, we must forcefully demonstrate that it is in the best interest of the international community, not just our own. By placing greater emphasis on Iraqi compliance with U.N. weapons inspectors, we can force reluctant U.N. and European Union authorities to side either with the United States or a law-breaking dictator. America must earnestly seek to include our allies in all diplomatic and military campaigns, but ultimately we should not limit our actions on account of international skepticism.

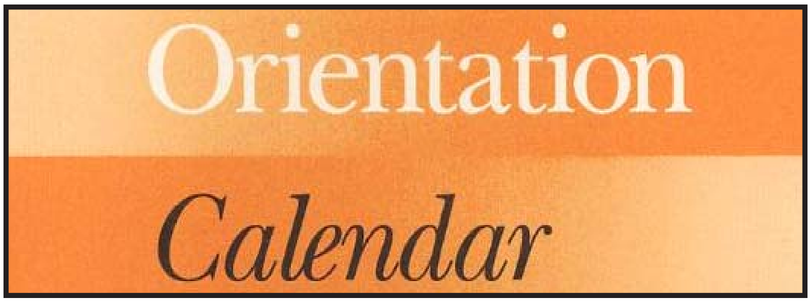
On September 11, 2001, America was viciously attacked, and today we remember. Rest assured however, that our enemies have not forgotten their deep-seated hatred for America and her allies. Terrorist camps are still functioning in distant desserts, Saddam still seeks nuclear weapons, suicide bombings have not ceased in Israel and sleeper terrorist cells exist throughout our homeland. Terrorism, a.k.a. radical Islamic militancy, remains a threat to democratic values throughout the world; it is America's duty to remain diligent in opposition. The question is—amidst the tears of the one-year anniversary—whether Americans are disciplined enough to dig in and fight.

Confessions of an Ex-Freshman

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

John Andrews '05

Reflecting upon my first year at Princeton, I remember Orientation Week with fondness. Among the indelible sensations is the exhilaration of exploring Princeton, that hitherto undiscovered country. I remember bicycling, with map spread across handlebars, from the spires of the Graduate College to the shops on Nassau, to the Engineering Quad and down to the dining clubs and Fine Hall. Walking excitedly along her gardens, courtyards, and endless bookshelves, I remember the palpable presence of Great Minds, architects of academia and America who must have once trod these same flagstones in a similarly adventuresome fashion.



At the same time, I sensed that something was unmistakably amiss. I detected a University-wide aversion to firm stands on philosophical, moral, and political issues. Such a reluctance, I observed, is antithetical to the spirit of Princeton's Great Minds of years past; nevertheless, it is present in each of Princeton's divisions: faculty, administration, and student body.

Trailing the presidential scepter at Opening Exercises was an invocation to an androgynous, multi-cultural God or Gods watching over us with decidedly non-judgmental passivity. Later that day, the Class of 2005 was lectured on the distinction between knowledge and information, as explained in the summer reading, followed by group discussions. Many hours pedantry in reading, lecture, and precept yielded only one, unsubtle idea – that knowledge *was* information – internalized rather than sitting on a shelf. I broached the subject of wisdom, comparing statements of Plato and the Psalmist on its value and purpose. The group responded as if I had quoted Mother Goose. I began to dread the rest of the mandatory events, including Tuesday's "Reflections on Diversity."

Then, that Tuesday morning, as I was meeting with my freshman advisor, something rather unexpected occurred. Estimates of those feared dead from the attacks ran as high as six thousand. Because of the shock to the student body, and perhaps also because the hijackers were suspected to be Arab Muslims, the administration postponed "Reflections on Diversity."

When the event was finally held, its message was predictable – that diversity of opinion is inherently good (regardless of the quality of supporting reason) and that simple exposure to people of different skin colors would edify us. However, while these speeches were being written for the Class of 2005, the terrorists were rehearsing their own malevolent display of diversity. It occurred to me that without shared purpose, which entails a requisite level of conformity, there can be no social contract, and hence no peaceable co-existence in society.

Thus, September 11 was my real orientation experience. That day, history belied the educational philosophy of a University eager to forfeit its birthright. But change comes slowly to a University – a slowness which is, historically, good. Long ago, such institutions served as the defenders of wisdom while Europe tried its hand at self-destruction. Now, Princeton and her siblings will continue to function as guardians of foolishness until the 1960s are a dim memory.

While intellectual conservatism is firmly rooted at Princeton, the legacy of the sixties is still strong in portions of Princeton's student body. Many see reason as instrumental in fulfilling human desires but reject its intrinsic value – the fundamental human good which natural-law conservatives believe reason must serve. Thus, instead of seeing the terrorist attacks as a violation of natural law, liberal students saw these attacks as a mere cultural misunderstanding (for which they blamed the United States).

A desire-based rather than natural-law-based philosophical system is particularly strong among certain student special-interest groups. These groups, however, are intellectually incapable of challenging the rationalist system, and frequently resort to distortion of fact. For example, at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) "Peer Education" session, gay liberationists grossly misrepresented the conservative rationalist-believer stance on "practiced" homosexuality. They

presented the orthodox Judeo-Christian stance as one which can be supported only by religious instruction or revelation. In fact, the argument against the agenda of gay liberationism is universally accessible through simple application of reason. Princeton's own Professor Robert George presents such a case in his excellent *The Clash of Orthodoxies*. In addition to misrepresenting the arguments of rationalist-believers, the LGBT speakers also categorized anti-liberationists as homosexuals in denial. One quickly becomes accustomed to such cheap ploys from the LGBT's sort, but to resort to this slander in front of Princeton's new arrivals (perhaps the only group likely to treat them credulously) is appalling.

While irrational liberalism in the student body is a serious obstacle to the thinking student, the freshman is also likely to face adversity in the ranks of Princeton's faculty. Such adversity comes not only from well-known professors like Peter Singer – to whose venomous proposals, incidentally, Professor George's book again provides an effective antidote. Many lesser-known professors are equally radical, as was my instructor for that bane of all freshmen, the writing seminar.

By occupation, he was a poet – a vocation not known for its keen grasp of logic. He presented the class material in a slanted manner. He once told the seminar that the United States selected the colors for its flag to honor France, revealing an historical deficiency. He equated the Confederacy's Southern cross to the swastika. His reading list was a bibliography of the disaffected and feckless artistic left. I chose my final paper, an indictment of the National Endowment for the Arts, to make it clear that he had not converted me; on the contrary, he had strengthened my resolve to bring moral clarity to artistic issues. In his final analysis, he indicated that he was "scared" by this conservative's improvement in writing ability. Though he was possibly half-joking, I would prefer my professors to be pleased by significant progress. My experience as the only conservative in a class is by no means unique; each conservative student has a favorite story about a liberal professor or preceptor.

Thus, the new scholar must beware of irrational liberals in the faculty and the student body. The university



administration, however, is responsible for bringing them to Princeton through hiring or admission. While the contemplative student might reasonably expect support from the administration, none seems forthcoming. Sadly, the recent admissions scandal casts doubt on the rationality and morality of portions of the administration.

Furthermore, the leadership's will to indoctrinate is demonstrated by such fiascoes as the aforementioned "Reflections on Diversity" and also "Sex on a Saturday Night." The latter, a bemusing yet mandatory orientation program, revolved entirely around whether an instance of sexual intercourse constituted "rape." The actual instance portrayed in the skit was in fact not a clear case of rape – at least not in my home state. (In short, though intercourse was not consented to, there was no duress because the girl drank herself into unconsciousness. Both criteria must be satisfied for rape. Unfortunately, the panelists never cited any legal definition of rape.) Yet the panel – all females in the session I attended – claimed that rape it was. Regardless of technicalities, this esoteric incident was the sole focus of the presentation. The panel ignored the mundane yet profound moral issues surrounding sexuality with which the student is confronted on a daily basis. The administration does the student body a great moral disservice when it implements a program covering the logistics of the one-night-stand, in a very permissive manner, while ignoring the metaphysics.

As such, the conservative or moderate scholar will frequently butt his cranium against the wall of academic close-mindedness. He will encounter refusals – from students, faculty, and administration – to fully examine moral and political issues. The observant freshman will quickly realize, if he has not already done so, that "academic freedom" extends in one direction only – leftwards – towards secularism, Skepticism, and collectivism.

Because I was confronted so dramatically with irrational liberalism in all three sectors of the University community, I began to apply critical thought to the issues presented to me. In that respect, Orientation Week was a success for me. However, I doubt that the antagonistic manner in which thought was provoked was the same as that which the designers had intended. The direct effect of Orientation Week on the freshman class is not to generate thought but to stifle it through indoctrination. The offending programs, many of which are mandatory, should be revised to fulfill the higher needs of Princeton freshmen.

Thinking back upon my first days at Princeton, I realize that the freshman

brings to Princeton inquisitiveness and purity of heart, a contribution which is sorely needed.

However, the freshman should be wary of individuals among the faculty, administration, and student body who would seek to exploit his freshness with irrational and inflexible dogma. When taken with a sizeable grain of salt, Orientation Week is informative and enjoyable.

To those interested in further reading on academic freedom, conservative thought, and the university, I would recommend passages from two books – preparatory reading which you will find far more edifying than pontifications on information versus knowledge. For a primer on the intellectual failure of the modern university, I suggest reading Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*, particularly the introduction and the parts headed "Students" and "The University." For the adventuresome reader, I recommend the chapter "Superstitions of 'Academic Freedom'" in William F. Buckley's *God & Man at Yale*, a book as trenchant and pertinent now as when it was written over fifty years ago.

Along with the rest of the *Tory* staff, I am delighted to welcome you to Princeton. Upon your arrival at Princeton, many campus organizations will attempt to recruit you. *The Princeton Tory* would like to do so as well. First, we hope that you will read our magazine upon its monthly distribution to your dormitory. Moreover, we hope that you will consider writing for the magazine. The *Tory* staff, in my unbiased opinion, is a fun-loving and dedicated folk.

Whatever our relationship with you, I warmly welcome you to the congenial group that is the *Tory* and the ennobling tradition that is intellectual conservatism. Join us, won't you, as we take arms against a sea of troubles?

Conservative University?

The Quest for the Truth

Betsy Kennedy '04

One of the very important purposes of attending college is the development of the ability to think for oneself and to draw one's own conclusions about the social, political and moral climate of this country and of the world. No doubt the students arriving on the Princeton campus in the fall hope to achieve this end before the conclusion of their four years.

Unfortunately, sometimes the ability of college students to think independently becomes hindered when the "facts" that they receive come from only one ideological camp, usually the camp of the political left. A non-profit organization called Accuracy in Academia concerns itself with this problem and states its intellectual mission simply: the quest for the truth.

To help spread their message, especially to the college age students who need to hear it most, Accuracy in Academia began a program called Conservative University, which takes place every summer at Georgetown University.

College students attend several lectures by noted conservative minds from across the country who believe that "by neglecting conservative ideas and viewpoints in the classroom, leftist academics have hindered students from coming to their own conclusions about the social and political issues that affect our society."

This past summer, I had the privilege of attending the Conservative University. Speakers like Dan Flynn, Reed Irvine, Burt Folsom, Joseph Sobran, John Lott and Dinesh D'Souza, to name just a few, offered their opinions on a variety of issues, from gun control to feminism, from abortion to Abraham Lincoln. Not all of the speakers agreed with one another. In fact, often times the speakers debated issues from different ideological perspectives.

The students in attendance were free to side with one or none of the speakers since the stress of the conference was on the free discussion of controversial topics.

In a classroom at Princeton University or any university, liberal-thinking professors often suppress this freedom of thought and discussion. For example, Accuracy in Academia tried to take their Conservative University to the campus of Columbia University. Speaker Dan

Flynn came back after the first day and a Columbia official informed him that he could not continue his program. Mr. Flynn pointed out that by forbidding him to speak, Columbia was denying his constitutional rights to free speech. No, the Columbia official informed him, Columbia was not banning the

Conservative University speakers but instead banning the students from attending the speeches. A clever twist, but the message was clear: any program or conference that came to Columbia University with a separate ideological agenda than that of the majority of the Columbia faculty and administration would not be permitted to offer its set of beliefs to the students.

Last year, for instance, I was enrolled in an American history class here at Princeton. The preceptor of my group stated that "no historian believes that there was an economic boom in the eighties, and therefore it is clear that Reaganomics does not work." Certainly my preceptor had a right to believe what she wanted to believe about Reagan and the 1980s. However, her presentation of her ideological beliefs as fact from a position of authority did not seem to be in keeping with the notion of helping students to think independently and rationally. When I presented a different point of view rationally and substantively, my opinion was discarded and the writers who I mentioned that agreed with me were scoffed at, regardless of their intellectual reputation. The grade that I received reflected the fact that I had differing political viewpoints from my professor, which to her clearly meant that I was misguided and incorrect.

This incident was exceptional in one way and quite normal in another. It was exceptional in that, in my experience, professors at Princeton have not been so unprofessional as to grade down for a certain ideological perspective. I have argued politically with more than one of my professors, and only once have I been punished for it.

On the contrary, I have been rewarded for my independent thought. The incident was normal in the sense that most of my professors have taught from a left-leaning viewpoint. Their presentations of moral, social, or political 'facts' have been considerably skewed to the left.

Princeton University has given me some of the most intellectually rewarding experiences of my life. The institution more than lives up to its reputation. However, the reason I have taken so much out of this institution is my refusal to accept the viewpoints of my professors without first consulting my own beliefs and sensibilities. Any intellectual growth I have experienced at Princeton came precisely from my willingness to question the lectures and readings to which I have been subjected.

Remember, as you sit in the classrooms of the daunting professors and read the works of their favorite authors, that they usually represent only one ideological camp. Whether or not you agree with that camp matters not. What truly counts is your ability to seek your own political, moral and social truth and have the intellectual freedom to do so without punishment. Therein rests the message of Accuracy in Academia, Conservative University, and the conservative political community at large.

The Walls of Frist Expose Princeton's Values (or lack thereof)

Brad Simmons '03

Campus newcomers may be surprised if they visit the northeast corner of the first floor of Frist Campus Center. Etched on one wall are the precious words of longtime performer Bob Dylan: "The locusts sang and they were singing for me." Not that Dylan is a particularly brilliant mind. Nor do these words provide especially acute insight to passers-by. In fact, it's said that he meant them to capture the absurdity of the ceremony he had just attended on Princeton's campus, one where he had been awarded an honorary degree. (As to the absurdity, no argument here.)

Some forty quotations blare from Frist's walls, looked at regularly by students checking mail, using computer terminals and angling to snag a free pool table. A closer look at the individuals quoted suggests that Dylan is among like-minded company, joined by a largely anti-establishment bunch, with the occasional luminary, athlete or noted scientist mixed in. Joyce Carol Oates and Toni Morrison have their obligatory space for chic poetic nothings. Oldies like F. Scott Fitzgerald are rightly given a platform. And, for good measure, a few unknowns have been thrown in, presumably for the inspirational tone of their remarks.

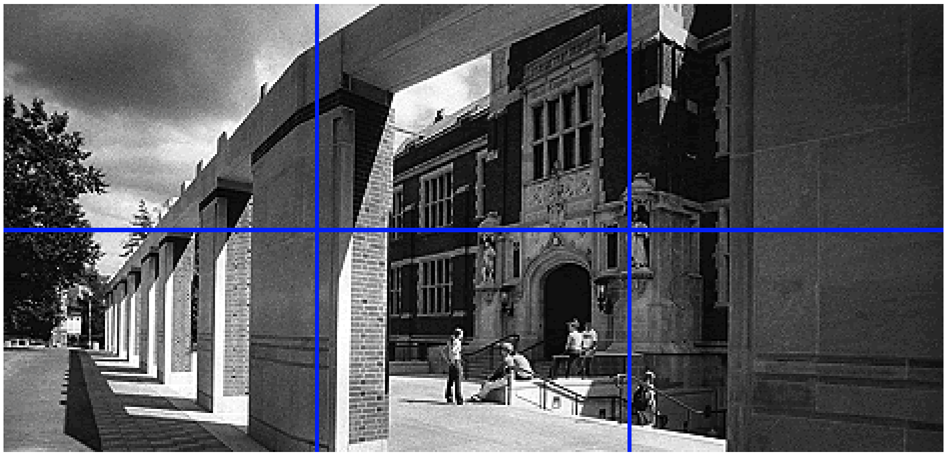
Yet even a brief glance at the list of those cited fosters suspicion about the criteria, if any, used for their selection. Setting aside the cluster of quotations that can't possibly create controversy – physicist Richard Feynman's "All matter is interaction" comes to mind – the only conceivable prerequisite for placement on the walls seems to be a poll taken of graduate students in the English Department. To say the least, the Dylan debacle proves that a meaningful affiliation with Princeton is irrelevant.

At least two other trends in speaker selection are cause for concern. First, the time period from which these men and women have been selected is undeniably narrow in scope, particularly given Princeton's 250-plus year tradition of producing outstanding graduates, many of whom were instrumental in bringing about lasting changes in America. The collection of individuals on display in Frist gives the impression that the most relevant expressions of Princeton's institutional values come primarily from 60's-era Vietnam reactionaries who have a bone to pick with society. With few exceptions, even those selected from earlier generations seem to have been chosen for their radicalism: misanthropic F. Scott Fitzgerald, high-minded Adlai Stevenson and idealistic Woodrow Wilson were by most accounts fish out of water.

Walls Matter

Certainly, the musings of radicals often function well as memorable sayings. But the revolutionary thinkers featured in Frist are surely of one political bent, a sort of trendy post-Vietnam skepticism of all things American. Hard as it may be, imagine if the reverse situation materialized, and an abundance of conservatives were plastered on the walls, ranging from Steve Forbes to James Baker. A few eyebrows would be raised, I suspect. Wouldn't right-leaning students be warranted in harboring similar feelings if the walls were filled with the likes of Ralph Nader and Cornel West? (Hint: defenders of the wall should be careful before answering that…)

If senior officials at Princeton were truly interested in diversity of thought and experience, those walls would look altogether different. They might have added George Will, Donald Rumsfeld and John Foster Dulles to the mix. The latter was the valedictorian of his class in 1908 and became one of the most influential foreign policy decision-makers in American history, but administrators apparently thought it more important to highlight Emily Moore's declaration that "identity is not singular." Not a single contemporary conservative thinker, but at least a dozen leftist writers from the past thirty years. Not one person recognizable for achievement in business or entrepreneurship, but exactly three



current faculty members from the Program in Creative Writing. Go figure.

The cherry topping off this sundae is the assortment of statements that were clearly never meant to be quoted, but confront students on a daily basis nonetheless. Take this excerpt from Randall Kennedy: "(T)hinking that frees itself from reflexive obedience to familiar signals." Or perhaps the eye-popper from our own Amy Gutmann: "Only by deliberating together about moral questions will we find mutual respect and common ground." One can only conclude that the choice of these passages, which – all due respect to these scholars – ought to be looked at primarily in lecture halls and libraries, was at least in part influenced by the political affiliation and purpose of their authors (especially Kennedy, who is a well-known liberal activist at Harvard).

Though it's tempting to dismiss an in-depth analysis of inscribed quotations in a new campus building as paranoid, it would be a mistake to overlook their symbolic importance. They carry as much weight, and probably more institutional permanence, than the speeches delivered at graduation ceremonies and the mottos espoused regularly by President Tilghman and her predecessors.

Moreover, we have to figure that, at some point, a group of decision-makers must have put thought into the quotation selection process.

Indeed, one need only look at statements engraved on older buildings to notice the shift in acceptable discourse at Princeton over time. Printed outside McCosh Hall, for example, is a lengthy passage concerning "democracy and righteousness" and the glories of being "taught by men in gothic towers." Next to the steps of Nassau Hall is even more piercing rhetoric, spoken in 1912 by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, reflecting on "love of country," "respect for (our country's) institutions," and the desirability of our "mighty nation" spreading its values across the globe.

The place these sentiments ought to have in Princeton's infrastructure – both physical and ideological – has been forgotten.

Not ten feet away from those forgettable lyrics mumbled by Dylan are genuine pearls, penned by a man who, shockingly, *is* an alumnus, a renowned scholar and leader, and worthy of study at a respected university. Not to pull rank, but he also happened to be the 4th President of the United States. One only wishes that the rest of the individuals given permanent advertising space at the center of campus resembled, even remotely, the intellectual stature of James Madison.

"A well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people."

Of course, the unique location of this observation – right next to the maintenance closet and a rarely-used restroom – may tell us more about Princeton's values than Madison ever could.

Science vs. Humanities:

Why ignorance in one field leads to bad policy in the other.

Brian Beck '05

As Princeton freshmen, you will already have been divided into two separate groups. Some of you will become liberal arts majors, most of those being social science/humanities majors, and a few will become pure science majors. The rest of you will go into the engineering school, with far fewer requirements outside of science and engineering courses.

Generally, those who enter the sciences tend to be more politically conservative than their liberal arts counterparts. However, almost all of the politically active students at Princeton come from the first group, and thus we are left with liberalism as the dominant political strain among active students. Across the country, for that matter, scientists are nearly completely cut off from the political scene. In this country's history, there have only been two research physicists in Congress, New Jersey Democrat and Princeton local Rush Holt and Michigan Republican Tom Ehlers. Given that one of our founding fathers (Benjamin Franklin) was also an extremely influential scientist, while another (Thomas Jefferson) was an inventor in his spare time, it is rather sad that there are so few statesmen of similar intellectual lineages in recent years.

At the end of last year, the *Tory* Publisher wrote about the need to study the history of Princeton's great men, but far more important today is a need to emulate the great founder from Pennsylvania. As a freshman, whether you are a liberal arts major or an engineer, it is important to actually seek out a balanced education; liberal arts majors should get involved in science, and engineers should get involved in the political scene.

Many who go into science do so to avoid the ugly nature of the politicized and often pseudo-scientific academy. In science, an idea that has been disproven is rejected; in the social sciences, contrarily, Marxism has had 70 years of failure and still has yet to be rejected by a slew of Princeton professors. If science departments acted like our politics departments, electrical engineers would still be using vacuum tubes and genetics would remain a mystery.

When it comes to environmental research, science takes a backseat to the alarmist fad of the day.

Princeton's newest hire, Cornel West, certainly has adopted the modern version of Marxism, viewing the world in the same terms as Marx but substituting race for class. Why would any scientifically-minded person – that is, one who believes that theory ought to be tested by experiment – want to deal with such fuzzy-mindedness?

Sadly, it is precisely those hazy, non-falsifiable assumptions that can set the tone for the sciences. Currently, the federal government is the main sponsor of most pure science research. When it comes to environmental research, in particular, science takes a backseat to the alarmist fad of the day. Thirty years ago it was global cooling; today, it's global warming. One serious danger comes from the animal rights and environmentalist movements. As left-leaning groups with an ostensibly "good cause," the harm caused by animal rights groups and environmentalists has largely gone unnoticed.

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF), supposedly a fringe group, has torched the offices of scientists working on genetic engineering, attempting to help humanity with better, healthier foods. But is ELF really a fringe group? Following the money trail, it becomes clear that People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), supported by fierce constituencies in Hollywood and Washington, has contributed significantly to the legal defense of these eco-terrorists. PETA's Bruce Friedrich has gone so far as to state publicly that, "It would be great if all the fast-food outlets, slaughterhouses, these laboratories, and the banks who fund them exploded tomorrow."

While PETA still is not quite mainstream and laboratories are not going to explode tomorrow, the campaign against animal testing retains significant support from Washington. If animal testing can be effectively shut down because a few extremists find it immoral, so can other experimentation that goes against principles. What's

to stop religious extremists from attempting to shut down research into the origins of the universe, or environmentalists from trying to shut down research into global warming? In fact, environmentalists have effectively removed dissent on global warming from important scientific journals, as has been demonstrated by the dearth of published articles contesting global warming theory in major environmental science publications.

Because scientists are not involved in politics, they understandably resort to arriving at compromises with extremists, severely hampering their research. If scientists whose views defy the conventional wisdom propagated by left-leaning activists are to protect their ability to discover the truth, then they must reverse this tendency to distance themselves from politics.



Scientists may need to get involved to protect their own rights to pursue the truth about nature, but why do politicians need to deal with scientists? Take a simple example: many of our future political leaders can be found in the world of college parliamentary debate, yet scientific evidence is verboten. Arguments such as, "If we cut down trees in the rainforest, we'll run out of oxygen and die!" are taken at face value, despite their absurdity (most oxygen on Earth is produced by aquatic algae, rather than land plants). Still, these are future policymakers. They don't get much better in Congress, either – listen to Democrats rail against the drilling at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as "environmentally unsound." Any C-SPAN debate on a scientific issue tends to be full of baseless assertions.

The case of nutrition has also come to a head recently. The Food and Drug Administration, going on the sound principle that "you are what you eat," has recommended a low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet for the last few decades. The food pyramid, to which we are all introduced in elementary school, recommends 8-10 servings of grains a day, no more than 1-2 servings of meat a day, and no fats. One doctor, Robert Atkins, recommended the opposite at the same time – a high-fat, high-protein diet with very few carbohydrates. One would think that nutrition, a scientific issue, would be settled by experiment. Not so. Nutritionists shut Atkins out of the academic community as a heretic against the low-fat diet, while Atkins' diet steadily gained support through his popular book.

Today, research concerning the efficacy of the Atkins approach is finally being done. If Atkins is right, then the government and academic community's stifling of dissent has been a major cause of our country's obesity epidemic.

Policymakers, in other words, need to learn to think scientifically. Rousseau's approach of, "Let us begin by setting facts aside, for they do not affect the question," does not work in the real world. Policymakers need to test their theories in some way before making them national policy. In the Soviet Union, the standard method of creating policy was the "5-year plan," which generally came from the whims of leaders rather than sound principles. Herein lies a perfect example of the "act first, study later" approach – and how well that worked!

From education to gun control, sentiment and prejudice beats out rational analysis in Congress. Not all left-wing ideas are completely at odds with science, nor are all right-wing ideas perfectly in tune with the scientific ethos. However, many silly ideas would be rejected if our policymakers stopped thinking with their hearts and started deliberating like scientists.

As freshmen at Princeton, your serious education in thinking as a policymaker or scientist starts now. Too many liberal arts majors take guts to avoid the alleged wrath of the ST requirement. "PHY 111: Contemporary Physics," I kid you not, has transformed the phrase "Physics for Poets" from a derogatory label into the title of a key course textbook.

Also, tempting as it may be, avoid fulfilling your ST requirement by enrolling in the mysteriously scientific "FRS 145: The Rise of Antiwar Sentiment in the Modern World." Undoubtedly, all of that important experimental research conducted by 60's-era liberal pacifists would be interesting, but let's get real.

Put simply, if you're a liberal arts major, don't wimp out and satisfy your ST requirement with some gut; take a real science course and learn how to think logically. And if you're an engineer, do not waste your liberal arts requirements on guts either; take challenging classes and learn how the rest of the world works. The dangers of the separation between science and politics are too great to ignore.

The un-REAL WORLD

A Place Where Superficial Diversity and Genuine Intolerance Run Rampant

Evan Baehr '05

From the Polo-wearing Carlton Banks of *Fresh Prince of Bel Air* to all-American Kyle Brandt on MTV's *The Real World*, Princeton has made its mark on popular television. While many think Princeton struggles to embrace diversity, it has, ironically, shown its prim and proper self in two television shows that have featured racial and ethnic tensions.

Hackneyed stereotypes pervaded both shows. Carlton, for instance, always wore preppy sweaters and listened to Tom Jones' "It's Not Unusual to Be Loved by Anyone" while he danced as if he were a middle-aged father embarrassing his kids. Juxtaposed to Carlton, Will Smith represented the "real black man" from "the hood," who cherished basketball and rap music. Though such trite character set-ups are vulnerable to harsh criticism, it can at least be acknowledged that the show's directors had no hint of social commentary embedded within their whimsical episodes. Meanwhile, MTV's wildly successful "documentary soap opera" series, *The Real World*, creates equally absurd situations yet heralds itself as an insightful exposition of interpersonal relations.

The vanguard of the reality show explosion, *The Real World* was launched in 1992, introducing it as "the true story of seven strangers picked to live in a house and have their lives taped." Viewers were told to "find out what happens when people stop being polite and start getting real." After ten seasons filmed at various locations across the United States, all garnering extraordinary ratings, *The Real World* has bombarded America's youth with lessons of false diversity and intolerance.

Much like Ivy League admissions policies, every *Real World* cast comes off as an attempt to win some elusive prize for having assembled the most politically correct group imaginable - episodes typically include a homosexual, a strong believer in religion, an Asian or Hispanic, at least one African-American, and a collection of Caucasians from every form of dysfunctional family. Although MTV seeks real diversity, they have honed in on characteristics that are only skin-deep; at bottom, each cast is a group of college-age partiers that likes to hook up and have a good time. Several exceptions over the years notwithstanding, an absence of passion and a desire to "hang out" are pervasive. Before the roommates even meet, MTV has created a *homogenous diversity*—a carefree group whose photos depict diversity but whose lives are monocultural.

The show's premise, that a group of radically different twenty-somethings must struggle constantly to approach roommate harmony, is laudable – our society depends on tolerance to maintain peace and protect rights. *The Real World* errs, however, when arguing that in an ideal world such struggles would be unnecessary; it overlooks the existence of longstanding, levelheaded belief systems that rightly frown on certain lifestyles and actions. Instead of struggling to embrace tolerance and maintain genuine diversity of thought, MTV encourages an unsophisticated homogeneity of beliefs, the result of which is to advocate the near elimination of belief itself (the exception, of course, being the

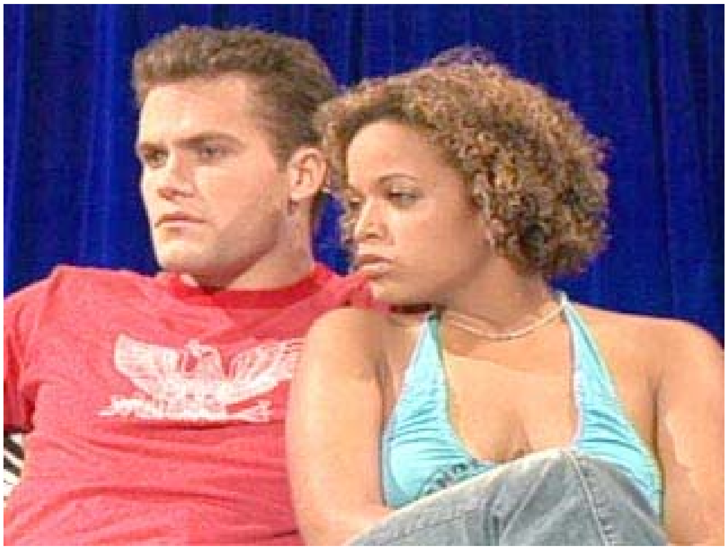
> **...every *Real World* cast comes off as an attempt to win some elusive prize for having assembled the most politically-correct group imaginable...**

necessity of belief in MTV's own "conviction-free" world). This paradigm might play out as follows: a Mormon and an atheist will get along more easily if they give up religion all together instead of learning and respecting each other's ideas. This is exactly what caused Brigham Young University to expel Julie Stoffer during her participation in *The Real World: New Orleans*.

Instead of reaffirming her life-long faith as a Mormon, Stoffer essentially disowned her religious background when she found that her lifestyle was incompatible with her party-crazed, promiscuous roommates. Her faith was challenged from the beginning when one castmate revealed that he had a boyfriend in the military.

In fact, his boyfriend would only visit if MTV signed a contract promising to not reveal his identity or show his face, the result of failure to do either being immediate expulsion from the service. Those in the house who questioned his lying to the military were consistently labeled "homophobic" – imagine, some of these kids valued honesty and respected the government!

Princeton's own Brandt fills the "all-American white boy" slot on the cast of *The Real World: Chicago*. Creator Mary-Ellis Bunim probably pinned him as the conservative, intolerant member who would not be able to handle "diversity." To MTV's dismay, Brandt turned out to be "a man of integrity, intelligence and complexity," as described by *The Real World* website *after* the season finished. Anyone who has experienced the diversity at Princeton is well prepared for and looks forward to encountering richness in culture, religion, and world-view. The cast he found in Chicago, however, was a big disappointment.



Don't let *homogenous diversity* fool you-the Chicago roommies still find their way into fights. Their arguments deal with issues of great importance, such as sleeping with someone after one date versus a few, talking on the phone too long, having sex in the hot tub versus the bed room, how to handle a two-timing lesbian lover, and whether sending flowers to a gay partner is too feminine. When the roommates "stop being polite and start getting real," they fight like children over insignificant issues relating to their social lives.

The Real World depicts tolerance as accepting, encouraging, and spreading the beliefs of others. Applied to religion, "real world" tolerance might suggest that Jews should become evangelists to encourage Christianity, in order to be "tolerant." In Chicago, it meant that Theo Gantt should expose himself to two men having sex in order to tolerate homosexuality.

Of course, the idea of tolerance is not that we all have to get along, nor is it that we have to like each other all of the time. Instead, it is the precept of acknowledging that others hold different beliefs and that everyone has a right to be different. With real tolerance, we create diversity by retaining and renewing our uniqueness. If *The Real World* were taken as lightly as *The Fresh Prince*, I would not worry.

However, when millions of youngsters watch episodes that claim to showcase diversity and teach tolerance, only to model their lives after promiscuous, college partiers, MTV has harmed society by shaping our youth to be tolerant of skin color and sexuality, but not of values or religion.

Move Over, Purple Ribbons!

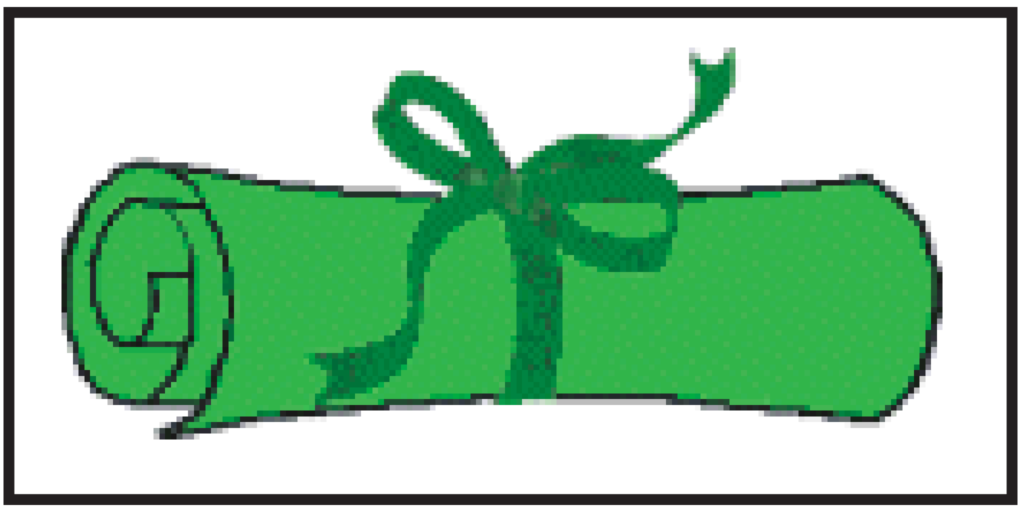
Why the politically-motivated "Grad Pledge" is a bad idea.

Daniel Mark '03

It may seem out of place to talk about graduation in September, let alone in the Freshman Issue of the *Tory*. But the nature of Princeton's "grad pledge," an optional commitment put before each graduating senior by student activists, is sufficiently important to warrant immediate discussion.

The commitment goes as follows: "I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects of any organization for which I work." Although graduation is still a long way off for seniors, and certainly for freshmen, I think this topic is pertinent for at least two reasons. First, I propose that my class, the Class of 2003, carefully consider the implications of signing the grad pledge and take remedial action now instead of in May, when it is too late. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the Class of 2006, with four years of college ahead, should take this matter to heart because it is just one small piece of a much larger puzzle. The freshmen should seize the opportunity to reflect on the ways in which they hope to shape this institution as it, in turn, shapes them.

Politics aside, the grad pledge is a bad idea. Seniors are asked to affirm this pledge before commencement, a time meant to mark their achievements and future prospects. It is an event, one among precious few over four years, which brings together the entire class. Seniors who agree to this pledge pin a green ribbon onto their graduation vestments. A website promoting the pledge claims that fifty percent of any graduating class typically signs the pledge. Even after accounting for laziness and ignorance, then, nearly fifty percent of the class actively refuses to sign. I suspect this is because graduation is a rare chance for the class to celebrate without fretting over the myriad of issues and interests that demanded and divided its attention for four years. Hence, graduation is precisely the wrong time to wage a campaign that segments the class into those who sport a green ribbon and those who do not.



In general, I am skeptical of ribbon campaigns. They often smack of the irony attendant to the lavish banquets held to combat world hunger. In this case, though, the green ribbon is free. No commitment of time or money necessary. But with nothing to show but some signatures, advocates of the grad pledge must believe one of two things. They must maintain that the grad pledge is either a deep commitment to a cause or a trifling addition to an already meaningful event. To the extent that the grad pledge represents a real commitment, then we must ask seriously what exactly we are committing to and, as I said, whether or not we want to divide the class along ideological lines during commencement. On the other hand, to the extent that the pledge bears little significance, we must wonder whether it trivializes both the magnitude of graduation and the true message of service that is fundamental to the Princeton education.

To be sure, I recognize the importance of pondering the ramifications of the life choices we make. However, for those who have not internalized Princeton's message of

service, a ribbon will hardly make a difference. I hope that, by graduation, we will have developed a sense of moral responsibility that does not need a pledge to affirm it. Indeed, a true public servant would shun a ribbon that screams "Look at me! Look at how kind and generous and thoughtful I am!"

I also object to the pledge because it truly is fraught with political overtones. Undoubtedly, critics will accuse me of opposing the pledge not out of respect for graduation, but out of hatred for poor people and the environment. By assuming that a conservative would be uncomfortable with the pledge for political reasons, they unwittingly admit the pledge's association with a more liberal ideology. Thus, they prove my contention that the grad pledge is hardly neutral.

For those who doubt my reading of the pledge, the following evidence should confirm its reflection of left-of-center thinking. Foremost, the website that hosts the grad pledge campaign belongs to the Peace Studies Institute of Manchester College in Indiana. If "Peace Studies" isn't a sufficient clue on where this organization stands, the site offers some helpful suggestions on fulfilling the pledge. For instance, job-seekers are urged to consider the four major "stakeholders" in a company they may work for: the consumers, the employees, the communities, and the environment.

Similarly, in an article entitled "Green after Graduation," the site suggests becoming a lawyer and defending "environmental victims, not to mention ecosystems that can't speak for themselves." In both examples, the language resonates with the view of the far left that that environmental concerns are independent of concerns for the people who inhabit a given area. The article also suggests working against a disease like AIDS "that has likely links to the environmental crisis." Pardon me, but I thought AIDS was worth fighting against before I knew it was linked to the "environmental crisis." The best, though, is the first suggestion. It reads, "Go work for a regulatory agency, and pledge to push the limits on protecting the environment regardless of the institutional pressures." Ah, yes, let us revel in the glory of government regulation.

How about a slightly different grad pledge this year? "I pledge to live my life in the service of God and to show the world the goodness of God's ways." Sign me up.

The site also recommends looking into whether or not a potential employer practices affirmative action, invests in socially screened ventures, or engages in animal testing. Though these are reasonable considerations for some people, it is clear that this operation is affiliated with a political agenda. To cap it off, the hosts counsel readers to choose employers that "distribute income fairly among workers" and allow "workplace democracy"—both of which sound like nice ways of saying "socialism."

Beyond the pledge campaign, the Peace Studies Institute supports other projects. One advocates the divestment of a massive pension fund from companies with ties to the three great evils of civilization: sweatshops, brutal dictatorships, and tobacco. A second link directs visitors to the National Index of Violence and Harm, which measures both personal violence (homicide, sexual offenses, etc.) and societal violence, which includes everything from air pollution to all harm "that comes about because of the structure of hierarchies of the United States society."

All of this from the people who bring you the grad pledge. I wonder what color ribbons they wear for Societal Violence Awareness Week.

Of all people, liberals should be the most sensitive to the idea of a grad pledge. Many on the left hail the 1992 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Lee v. Weisman*. The majority ruled that graduation ceremonies loom so large in the psyche of young adults that even a nondenominational prayer at such an event violates the so-called separation of church and state.

More recently, the Ninth Circuit Court held that the Pledge of Allegiance violated our sacred principle of religious neutrality. After that debacle, one might expect to see the liberals quietly back away from such seemingly neutral pledges.

Instead, we have a graduation ceremony *with* a pledge, and the liberals are all over it like flies on, well, you know what.

But hey, *Tory* readers might as well go with the flow. How about a slightly different grad pledge this year? "I pledge to live my life in the service of God and to show the world the goodness of God's ways." Sign me up.

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